

**Watertown Christian School
Notification of Rights under FERPA
For Elementary and Secondary Schools**

FERPA, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, is a Federal law that applies to educational agencies and institutions that receive funding under a program administered by the U. S. Department of Education. *Parochial and private schools at the elementary school levels do not generally receive such funding and, therefore, are not subject to FERPA.* The statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the Department's regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99.

Although Watertown Christian School (WCS) is a private school and does not receive Federal funding we wish to make sure that your child's records are afforded the same level of protection that FERPA requires.

Under FERPA, schools must generally afford parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

(4) WCS will seek parental consent when a request for educational records is received from officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled, if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

(5) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-8520

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Notice for Directory Information

FERPA, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, is a Federal law that applies to educational agencies and institutions that receive funding under a program administered by the U. S. Department of Education. *Parochial and private schools at the elementary school levels do not generally receive such funding and, therefore, are not subject to FERPA.* The statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the Department's regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99. Although Watertown Christian School (WCS) is a private school and does not receive Federal funding we wish to make sure that your child's information is afforded the same level of protection that FERPA requires.

FERPA defines "directory information" as information contained in the education records of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Typically, "directory information" includes information such as name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and dates of attendance. A school may disclose "directory information" to third parties without consent if it has given public notice of the types of information which it has designated as "directory information," the parent's or eligible student's right to restrict the disclosure of such information, and the period of time within which a parent or eligible student has to notify the school in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information designated as "directory information." The means of notification could include publication in various sources, including a newsletter, in a local newspaper, or in the student handbook. The school could also include the "directory information" notification as part of the general notification of rights under FERPA. The school does not have to notify a parent or eligible student individually. (34 CFR § 99.37.)

Watertown Christian School has designated the following information as directory information: Student's name, address, phone number, photograph, age, and grade level.

Under FERPA schools, with certain exceptions, are required to obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the school may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to a school, such as Watertown Christian School, to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production
- The annual yearbook
- Honor roll or other recognition lists
- Newspaper submissions of awards received
- Graduation programs
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

These laws are: Section 9528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7908), as amended, and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c), as amended.